

# THE EVANGELIST.

---

VOL. I. NOVEMBER, 1824. [No. 11.]

---

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

ON CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

Christianity does not consist, substantially, in mere articles of faith, or a system of doctrines. These are contained in it as necessary and essential parts, but do not constitute the whole. The same may be said of duties and external observances. They do not constitute the whole of christianity. They are however implied in it, and constitute necessary parts of it. Faith without works is dead, and so are works without faith. So plain is this that it would seem almost impossible, that any candid person should fall into mistakes concerning it. Mistakes, however, have been made, and the plainest truths perverted. Many seem to think, that if their principles are correct, and their creeds orthodox, it is of but little consequence how they live. Their correct sentiments are to atone for their neglect of personal piety; and their saying to Christ, "Lord, Lord," is to compensate for neglecting to do the things he has commanded. There are others again, and the number of them, at this day, is by no means small, who embrace an error equally great, but in the opposite extreme. They suppose it to be of very little, if indeed any consequence, what a man's religious sentiments or opinions may be, provided his external conduct is in a good degree correct. Perhaps it may be difficult to determine which of the two schemes is most erroneous and dangerous. The idea that *practical* religion may be successfully cultivated where the doctrines of religion are neglected and unknown, is as great a mistake, as it would be to suppose, that the *fruit* of the vine may be successfully produced, where the *vine itself* was never planted. And yet multitudes have fallen into this mistake, and desire that religious teachers would inculcate merely the duties of religion, without meddling with its doctrines; and are often displeased with them for declining the unauthorized and unprofitable undertaking. As well might they require an artificer to erect them an edifice without a foundation, or supply them with a stream of water without a fountain to support it. The necessity of the doctrines of the gospel, as laying the only foundation, on which mankind can be made to *feel* their obligation to become holy, may be easily shown. Our Saviour evidently viewed the subject in this light. For he said in a solemn address to his Father, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." But how are God and Jesus Christ to be known, without



an acquaintance with the doctrines of the gospel? How can we ever know whether we love God, and Jesus Christ, unless we understand the scriptural account of their character? And how can we understand their character, without taking into consideration, the things, which they have revealed? The apostles also preached and practised under the influence of the same belief. They said, "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The greatness of this love, in their view, depended on the circumstance of his giving his son for us, while we were yet sinners. How then can we ever see the *greatness* of this love, unless we are convinced that we *are sinners*, understand the doctrine of depravity, and have some just ideas of the extent of our guilt? It is plain, that unless we see the greatness of our depravity, we shall never feel the greatness of our obligation to God, for the gift of his Son, nor to Christ, for shedding his blood. And if the doctrine of atonement is kept out of sight, all evangelical motives to repentance and faith will be annihilated. A similar connection exists between all the great *doctrines* of the gospel and *personal holiness*. Let the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, future judgment, and eternal retribution be given up, and all foundation of christian obedience will be destroyed. If these observations are correct, they show, that although an orthodox belief is not sufficient, of itself, to constitute christian character, yet it is essentially implied in it.

The same is true of negative virtue, or mere harmlessness. It is a species of righteousness, of itself wholly inadequate to the purposes of salvation; although it is necessarily implied, in the very first step, which a sinner takes in turning to God. He that would become a christian must put off the old man which is corrupt with his evil deeds; or in other words, must obtain a conviction of his sins and relinquish them. It is a proposition sanctioned by divine authority, that, "No man can serve two masters"—"Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Sin and holiness are opposites. Where one obtains the other necessarily ceases. A person must cease to be proud before he can become truly humble. He must cease to be selfish before he can become truly benevolent. He must cease to be sensual and worldly minded, before he can become spiritual and have his conversation in heaven. He must cease from intemperance, cruelty and injustice, before he can become truly temperate, kind and upright. In a word, he must discontinue to serve the creature *unduly*, before he can love and serve the Creator supremely. This kind of virtue, however, even if it were possible for it to exist alone in a state of perfection, would be wholly insufficient to constitute a dutiful and acceptable disciple of Jesus. In order for this, the sinner must not only become divested of the "old man that is corrupt," but he must put on the "new man," which in imitation of the moral character of God, is created in active and true holiness. He is commanded to put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearance, forgiveness, and above all things—charity, which is the bond of perfectness. He is required to let the peace of God rule in his heart, and to be thankful, and to have the word of Christ dwelling in him, in all wisdom; and whatever he does, in word or deed, it is enjoined upon him, to do all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; giving thanks to God and the Father by him. He is commanded to be fruitful in every good word and work. The various positive virtues of the christian character are



so well known, that a particular enumeration of them cannot be needful. My readers must be well aware that personal christianity implies a *principle* of benevolence, of humility, of contrition and gratitude—a *temper* of forgiveness, of candour, of teachableness and compassion—a *habit* of prayer, of social worship, of application to the holy scriptures, and the *practice* of honesty, justice and charity. The disciples of Christ are required to imitate their divine and glorious Master. They are exhorted to imbibe his spirit and to follow his steps. It is expressly said, “If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” But the spirit of Christ was a spirit of love, fidelity and zeal towards God. It was a spirit of goodness, kindness and faithfulness towards men. He always exercised the most lively compassion towards the miserable, the most tender affection towards his friends, and the most ardent benevolence for his enemies. As a teacher, he was in the highest degree faithful. He exhibited truth in the clearest and plainest manner, without regard to the opinions or applauses of men. As a reprover he was equally faithful; rebuking the wicked, and exhorting gainsayers to turn and live. And in all these particulars of moral excellence, the disciples of Jesus must be his practical followers. They must feel a cordial devotion to the will and service of God; they must be faithful in the performance of religious duties, and employ their time and talents in works of benevolence and righteousness. They must exhibit laudable examples of love towards one another, of fidelity to their Lord and Saviour, and of true goodness towards mankind.

These virtues must be practised not merely in a *moderate* but in an *eminent* degree. It is not enough that christians avoid gross iniquity and practise a few virtues; they must *eminently distinguish* themselves from others, in real practical godliness.

Mankind, in general, are ambitious to be considered as possessing some degree of virtue. Even the most depraved character, which can be found, would wish to be considered, as possessing some good qualities; performing some good actions; and being actuated by some good motives. While many persons, who are evidently destitute of true religion, have even acquired *reputation*, for their inoffensive and useful lives. But christians must do more than even these. By their freedom from actual iniquity, by their possession of inward goodness, and by their practical virtues, they must distinguish themselves from all other descriptions of mankind. They must walk more blamelessly, soberly, righteously and piously in the world. Every christian must aim at *distinction* in moral excellence. It must be his constant endeavour to go *beyond* his fellow creatures, in all that is good. There are many injunctions in the holy scriptures, which plainly imply, that this is required of the servants of God. They must distinguish themselves from all other men. They are called the light of the world, and a city set on a hill, that cannot be hid. But, if they do not distinguish themselves from others, they certainly can be hid; indeed they are hid. They are commanded to let their light shine before men, that others may see their good works, and be excited to glorify God. But if they do not distinguish themselves, they let no light shine, others will not see their good works, and God will not be glorified. They are also called the salt of the earth, and commanded to have salt in themselves. But, if they are not distinguishable from others, the salt has lost his savor—it is good for nothing—fit only to be thrown out, and trodden



under foot of men. And, Paul declared, that he wished to provoke to emulation those who were his kindred according to the flesh. He declared of himself that he forgot the things that were behind, and reached to those that were before, and pressed towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He exhorted his Philippian brethren, that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, that they should think of these things and do them. To the Hebrews he said, "Let us go on to perfection." And the apostle Peter enjoined, that professors of the religion of Jesus should grow in knowledge and in grace.

There are some christian duties, which have not been considered as virtues by the unchristianized world. Habitual humility and self-abasement for sin, supreme love to God, and a greater concern for divine and eternal realities than for the things of time, and a love for enemies; these *dispositions* and *habits* seem to have found *no place* in the catalogue of pagan virtues. But in these things the christian must render himself conspicuous. He must give noticeable evidence of a humble mind, of a contrite spirit, of conscious ill desert before God, of supreme regard to the Divine Creator, and of a principal desire to honor the Saviour and secure eternal life. As, in these things, christianity differs from other systems of religion and virtue, the disciple of Jesus must distinguish himself by them. He must faithfully distinguish himself by evangelical humility and penitence, by holy love to God, by a mind weaned from the world and prevailingly disposed to seek the things of the kingdom of heaven.

The importance and necessity of a life thus devoted, appear in the clearest and most striking manner, from the consideration, that it serves to glorify God. It serves to illustrate the excellence of his character. Christianity is a religion of divine institution. It originated with God and was revealed from heaven. Its doctrines, its laws, its precepts, its prohibitions, its promises, and its denunciations were given and ordained by the great Jehovah. If, then, there is nothing good or excellent in this religion, it is certainly no honor to God to be its author. But, if it is excellent and good, its excellence and goodness must be seen. Its principles and tendencies must be manifested. If the faith which God has enjoined is valuable, if it is a fruitful principle of moral goodness, it reflects great honor upon God. That which directly and spontaneously produces good, must be good in its own nature. If the stream is sweet, the fountain from which it flows must be sweet. If the christian religion has an effect to improve the human character; if its direct influence tends to improve the heart, to correct the outward conduct, to inspire sentiments and feelings of benevolence and kindness, and excite to practical righteousness and piety, it must be an excellent religion. And if this religion is excellent, its author likewise must be excellent. This author is the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. He must, in this case, be a worthy and glorious being, having instituted a religion, which is of invaluable worth and an infinite blessing to the world. This religion, being his gift, is a kind of transcript or image of his moral character, and must of course constitute a display of his divine perfection and glory.

But the excellence of christianity must principally appear, in its ef-



fect upon the hearts and lives of men. If faith in the scriptures of the old and new testament did not actually render believers better than they would have been without it, its value would be deeply diminished. If no one was rendered more virtuous and happy, by believing in the word and the Son of God, the christian religion would in a manner, be a worthless thing to the world. For however correct and rational, plausible and beautiful a scheme of religion may appear to be, in a theoretical and philosophical view of it, yet if it actually produces no beneficial influence upon mankind ; if it leaves them as deeply polluted with sin, and as destitute of righteousness as it found them ; it is to the world an unprofitable religion. And of course it confers no glory upon its author. But the more influential a religion is, in promoting the virtues and rational enjoyments of mankind ; the more it sanctifies them in the present world, and the better it prepares them for heavenly and everlasting bliss, the greater is its real excellence, and the more inestimable its value. It hence evidently results, that if believers in revealed religion, and professors of gospel holiness, are not more free from sin, and more inclined to righteousness, than they would have been in unbelief, or than others of the world are, they do no honor to the religion they profess. They are no honor to their Saviour ; they are no honor to God.

But if believers in the holy scriptures, the avowed disciples of Jesus, are careful to abstain from wickedness ; if they manifest that their hearts are purified from sin, and their lives from transgression ; if they evince a mind impressed with sentiments of holiness, and exhibit a course of conduct regulated by the laws of true virtue ; if they obviously exceed others in the possession and practice of real goodness ; if the virtues they display appear evidently to be the offspring of their religious faith, *then* they honor their religion, and glorify its divine author. They give demonstrative proof of the superior excellence of christianity, and consequently bear irresistible testimony to the goodness of God. And the more they excel in true goodness of character, the more do they glorify their heavenly Father. The greater their attainments are in a holy life, the greater also is the honor, which they confer upon religion, upon Christ, and upon the Almighty Jehovah. The higher they rise above others and the brighter their light shines, the more honorable is the testimony, which they give to the merits of their faith. If they *distinguish* themselves by deeds and habits of virtue, if they become *eminent* in holiness and *abound* in all righteousness, then, great indeed, is the honor, which they reflect upon their divine Teacher and Lord. Herein is the Great God, their Creator, glorified, that they bear much fruit.

And now, christian reader, what more urgent and powerful motive can be placed before you to excite your diligence and faithfulness. By yielding obedience and manifesting fidelity, you may glorify God. By this means you may please and honor Jehovah, your infinite Creator. And is not this a powerful motive ? Is not the idea of pleasing and honoring a worthy and beloved parent a powerful motive to exertion ? Is not the idea of pleasing and honoring a kind, generous and respectable benefactor a strong inducement to action ? Is not the idea of pleasing and honoring a great and good king a consideration of great weight to influence the conduct of his dutiful subjects ? Why, then, should not the idea of pleasing and honoring God be a powerful motive to faithful-



ness and devotion in his service? He is, certainly, the Parent, the Benefactor, and the rightful Sovereign of mankind, and consequently must have an absolute right to your sincere and unreserved obedience. And the excellency of his character is such as renders him infinitely worthy of all he requires of you. And he has condescended to inform you, that he will be pleased and honored by your diligence and faithfulness in his service. What a powerful motive, what a strong inducement, then, is placed before you, to stimulate you to activity and zeal! How impressive the call of duty, that you render yourself fruitful in the production of christian virtue and holiness! If Christ is your master, you ought to obey him continually. If Jehovah is your God, you ought to worship and honor him devoutly. If the Father and Son are your Sovereign and Redeemer, you ought to serve them with your body and your spirit, with all your heart and all your powers. How dishonorable and criminal is unfaithfulness? In any service, which one man may engage to perform for another, unfaithfulness is always dishonorable. Do you not always despise and condemn the man, who is guilty of it, even in relation to a fellow creature? But if it is shameful and vile to be negligent and slothful in the service of man, what must be the crime of committing such an offence against the God of heaven! If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him, but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? With much propriety may the Son of God, in the day of judgment, when he comes in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels, be *ashamed* of all those who have been guilty of this. For it will then fully appear, that they have been no honor to his cause—that it has been no honor to him, that they have been numbered among his disciples—and that they have done nothing to glorify his Father. C. G.

---

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

SELFISHNESS NOT THE MAINSPRING OF HOLY OBEDIENCE.

Some suppose, that all the actions of men—of *saints*, as well as of *impenitent sinners*, spring from self love, or from a principle of selfishness; that if any serve God, it is because he bestows favours upon them, or because they expect he will. In a word, they suppose every one seeks primarily his own interest and gratification.

There are others who readily acknowledge, that selfishness is the mainspring of action in the *natural man*; and, that it reigns supremely in every impenitent sinner. But they deny this to be the case with the real child of God. They suppose, that the true believer in Jesus loves and serves God because he is most worthy and because he requires such service. They suppose, obedience, of this kind, is exercised by all the inhabitants of Heaven; and, in a degree, by all good men on earth; that this is the beginning of new life in the soul; and, that without it, there can be no holiness, or conformity to God.—If this is true, the very essence of religion is involved, and of course the subject is one of the greatest importance.

Under these circumstances, it might naturally be expected, that the scriptures would be sufficiently explicit, to guide us into all necessary



truth concerning it.—That they do shed *much light* upon it, I think, must be acknowledged by every impartial, and attentive reader.

It would not, however, comport with my object, even if I had time to consider all the passages which have a bearing on this point. I shall bring forward only a small portion of scripture history, by way of illustration, and add a few remarks.

The history of Job has ever been accounted one of the most interesting and profitable portions of the *old testament*. But with nothing have I been more delighted and edified, than with the view, in which it presents the subject before us.

It will be recollected, that *Satan* (the old serpent) came into this world soon after our first parents ; and, although they were in a state of innocence and happiness, he succeeded in drawing them from their *allegiance* to their MAKER, into an *alliance* with himself. After their revolt, he held, for a short time, the government on earth.

But God, by his grace, erected a *kingdom of righteousness* in this section of his vast dominions, with a determination to defend and enlarge it, till the whole province should be brought back into humble subjection to himself. The grand adversary of souls, however, taking advantage of the deceitfulness and power of sin, and of the corruption of the human heart, has had great success against the kingdom of grace. He has, at times, been seemingly flushed with the hope of victory ; when nearly all the world had gone after him, acting from his spirit, and in harmony with his views.

Not unlikely, it was at such a time as this, the *celestial conference* was holden, of which we have an account in the book of Job. It appears from the record, that on a certain occasion, the “*sons of God*” presented “*themselves before the LORD* ; and *Satan* came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, whence comest thou ? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.” Here, in a boasting manner, he asserted his universal dominion in this lower world ; that he had surveyed the whole ; and, that all our fallen race, in every part of it, were his subjects, acting from the same principle with himself.

But “*the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil.*” He was not willing to admit the claim of the adversary, and referred him to the case of Job, as the most perfect man on earth. (For it required a great degree of piety to shine conspicuous in religion, when exposed to the temptations and snares of so much worldly prosperity.) It is probably meant, that there was none like him in perfection, and not in moral character. For we have reason to suppose, there were some real saints besides him. But if he were the *most* eminent for piety, and it could be proved, that *he* was actuated by an unholy principle, the case would be decided. Satan would support his claim, and there could be no need of further trial.

“*Then Satan answered the Lord and said, Doth Job fear God for nought ? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side ? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*”—Here Satan, to vindicate his claim, charged Job with mer-



enary views ; or, with selfishness as the *moving cause* of his obedience. This seemed to be the *point* on which the scale should turn. It appears to have been *understood* and *acknowledged*, on both sides, that if he were governed chiefly by selfishness, or personal considerations, he was a subject of Satan, under his government, and obedient to his laws. If not, he was a subject of the divine kingdom. “Doth Job fear God for nought ?” He could not deny the excellence and uprightness of Job’s conduct ; but maintained, that he did not serve God chiefly because he was worthy—out of supreme love to him—respect to his commands, and the best interest of his kingdom ; but from a selfish principle—for the valuable blessings he had received—the riches, honors, comfort and safety conferred upon him. Nothing in the outward appearances or circumstances of Job could be brought against him. Yet the vile accuser told God, in an insolent manner, that if he would *touch* or *take away* all he had given him, his selfishness would be readily seen ; and, of course his want of piety would become visible. “And,” said he, “he will curse thee to thy face.” It seems evidently to have been understood in what true piety consisted. The Lord, so far from denying, that it would prove Job destitute of holiness, if he were really actuated by such a selfish principle, gave Satan liberty to try him by the means suggested. Accordingly he was deprived of his property, and of his children, in rapid succession ; and, in a most distressing manner. Yet “In all this, Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”

But Satan still insisted, that he did not serve God for nought ; that the trial was not satisfactory, while some blessings still remained. For “all that a man hath will he give for his life.” The Lord then permitted him to proceed still farther ; and, although he did not suffer him to take *life*, yet he inflicted a disease, which caused Job to desire *death* ; and, of course, the trial was equal to *death itself*. The *esteem* of his friends and even of his bosom companion was apparently withdrawn ; and even the prospect of receiving his favours again was blighted before him. But “in all this did not Job sin with his lips.” “What ! said he, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil ?”

It appears then, that *one* has been found on earth, who did not serve God *chiefly* from a selfish principle, so far as any test could be applied. If *one* has acted from a different principle, *others* may. If *this* was necessary in *Job*, to possess *holiness*, or *uprightness* of character, both in the judgment of God, and of Satan, the *same* is necessary now, to possess a similar character, to be a true servant of the Lord, and a subject of his kingdom. The character of Job admirably corresponds with the spirit of all the pious men, apostles and martyrs, who were willing to spend and be spent for the glory of God and the good of souls. It harmonizes with the example of our Saviour, who, as man, did not his own will, but the will of the Father ; and also, with the sum of the *law*, which requires to love God *supremely*, and our neighbour as ourselves. From *observation* we likewise *learn*, that the *hypocrite* and the *vilest men* are actuated by selfishness. Reason should therefore teach us, that those who are better in the sight of God, and possess the character of *uprightness*, must act from a *better principle*.

REMARKS.—1. It is worthy of notice, that God should grant and Satan maintain that selfishness is averse to holiness ; and that wicked



men should deny it. But it may not appear so strange, when we consider the cause of this difference. Satan was endeavouring to prove a *good man*, to be a *bad one*. That his external uprightness was not *holy*, nor *acceptable*, on account of the *principle* from which it sprang. On the contrary, the wicked endeavour to justify themselves, and to prove, that *bad men* are *good*. That they may be upright with God, while they act from a selfish principle. Satan was claiming a real *child* of God as his *own subject*. They endeavour to satisfy *themselves*, and make it appear to *others*, that they are the *children* of God, while they are *really* the *children* of the *wicked one*.

But we should suppose that a *fact* acknowledged, and a *point* decided between God and his adversary, need not be a matter of controversy among men.

2. If it is necessary to love and serve God because he is most worthy, and not chiefly from self-interest, how liable are men to be deceived as to their religion! Surely we have reason to fear, that many are reconciled to the government of God (if it may be called reconciliation) merely because it favours their interest, and gratifies their wishes. How awfully deluded are those, who think they are pleasing God and enjoying his approbation, while they are only pleasing themselves, and gratifying self-love—while they are acting from a principle entirely opposite to the glory of the Supreme Being, and the general good; a *principle*, which tends to create as many *distinct interests*, as there are selfish beings in the universe; and so would introduce universal contention.

Finally—How important is the trial of our obedience.

Let the subject be applied by all, as a *test* of their moral character, and standing with God. “Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world?” Where is the scrupulous hypocrite? Where is the dull formalist? Where is the man of pleasure? Where is the miser who embraces his money as his God? Where is the cold and cautious calculator, who will never give a cent, or *do any thing further* than he can see it turning to his own advantage? Where is the man who is seeking for worldly promotion and honor? Ah, how clearly would Satan support his claim to *these*, as his loyal subjects, acting from the same principle and spirit with himself. Though acting different parts in his general cause, yet in perfect harmony with his views. How many would manifest a want of attachment to God, and murmur against him, if they were stript of their blessings and reduced to the condition of Job, in his affliction! How soon would their entire selfishness and want of piety be made to appear! Their *goodness*—their pretended contentment, patience and reconciliation, like the morning cloud and the early dew, would soon go away. But *we need* a holiness that will not only endure the *furnace of affliction*, but the *light of eternity*, and the *trial of the great day*. When examined and tried by the JUDGE himself, in the presence of *good men* and *angels*, *bad men* and *devils*, how many will be found destitute of the pure benevolence of the gospel! How many will then appear to have been governed by entire selfishness,—in league with the prince of darkness—partakers of his abominable deeds, and co-workers in the business of deception. “Oh, my soul, come not thou into their secret! unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united.” A.



## FOR THE EVANGELIST.

## THE SON OF GOD DESPISED AND REJECTED.

MR. EDITOR,

I read in the Evangelist a short time since, a piece entitled, *The Son of God worthy of reverence*, founded on the declaration, "They will reverence my Son." This was explained, not as determining the manner in which he certainly would be received, but rather the manner, in which he ought to be received, and in which from the nature of the case, it might be reasonably expected he would be received. Since reading it, I have felt a desire to address your readers, and especially those of them who are impenitent, on the manner in which the Son of God has been received. Says the prophet Isaiah, in reference to Christ, "*He is despised and rejected of men.*"

As the words, *They will reverence my Son* are expressive of the manner, in which, it might have been reasonably expected, beforehand, that the Son of God would be treated; so the words, *He is despised and rejected of men* are expressive of the manner, in which he actually has been treated and may I not add, of the manner in which he is still, actually treated among men. These words are indeed the language of prophecy, and happy would it be, if melancholy facts had not universally converted this prediction into actual history. But alas, at what period, since God sent his Son into the world, has it not been the affecting truth, that "he was despised and rejected of men." Reasonable as it was to expect that men would reverence the Son of God, considering the glory of the Father who sent him, the dignity and glory of the Son himself, the character and state of those, to whom he was sent, and the benevolent and gracious purpose for which he came, yet all along the melancholly truth might be expressed, precisely in the words of the prophet, *He is despised and rejected of men.* As it was but a reasonable expectation, that men would reverence this glorious and divine person, so it is matter of wonder and astonishment, that they should despise and reject him. Perhaps this is what the prophet designed to represent, when he says, "Who hath believed our report?" Who will give credit to such an incredible thing? Who will be able to believe, what we have to declare, concerning the Son of God, and the treatment he is to receive? "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness; and, when we shall see him, there is no beauty, that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. And we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

The Lord Jesus Christ, of whom these things are spoken, was sent into the world, by God the Father. As he himself expressed it, he came forth from the Father, and came into the world. He came on a very important errand, from him, who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. From him, who doeth according to his pleasure in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, before whom all nations are but as a drop of the bucket, and the light dust of the balance. This glorious being sent his beloved Son into our sinful world. Yet, "he is despised and rejected of men."



He is the equal son, who thought it no robbery to be equal with God ; he is the Creator of all worlds, and their government is on his shoulders ; in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily ; he is the chief among ten thousands, full of grace and truth, whom all the angels of God are commanded to worship ; and yet " he is despised and rejected of men."

Man, to whom he was sent, is a dependent, a helpless creature. His foundation is in the dust. He is crushed before the moth. Concerning him, it is pertinently enquired, " Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him ?" Yea, it is man, who, at his best state, is altogether vanity. He is, besides, a most guilty and ill deserving creature. He is so guilty, so ill deserving, that it is of the Lord's mercies, that he is not consumed. Such are men. Poor, feeble, helpless, guilty worms of the dust. Yet, when God sends his beloved Son, on a most important embassy, to these dependent, helpless, ruined creatures, they despise ; (who would think it possible ?) they despise and reject him !

He comes, too, not as an enemy, but as a friend. He comes not armed with terror, and clothed with vengeance ; but bearing a message of peace and love. Not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. He came to be the Saviour of the world. And while he was here, he employed his whole time in the most benevolent manner. He constantly went about doing good. He healed all manner of diseases. He opened the ears of the deaf, and the eyes of the blind. He caused the dumb to speak, and sing for joy. He raised the dead. He preached the gospel to the poor. He showed the way of salvation to the ignorant. Yes, he came to subject himself to reproaches, to sorrows, to sufferings, to death itself, for the redemption and salvation of sinners. Yet, (ah, how shall the affecting truth again be told ?) Yet he was despised and rejected of men. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this !

But, is it so, indeed ? Is there such baseness, such malignity, such ingratitude, such wickedness, in the human heart ? Can it be that men despise and reject him, who is altogether lovely ; whom the most exalted angel in glory adores ; of whom God the Father declares, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; and, who declares of himself, I and my Father are one ? Can it be that they despise him, when he has come on an errand of love to them, and is even acting as the Redeemer and Saviour of their souls. Can they despise him, when he comes offering grace, mercy and peace, when his language is, " Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ; Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any hear my voice and open the door I will come in, and sup with him and he with me." Do they after all despise and reject him ? Alas, nothing is more certain. Do you still want evidence of the affecting fact ? Come then, and trace the history of his life, and the history of his death. He enters upon his public ministry, in the most unexceptionable manner. He conforms to every ceremony, which the Jewish religion requires. He literally fulfils all righteousness. His conduct is unblemished, his character spotless, innocent, and pure. He enters on his work, by performing a series of miracles, which, at once, show forth his tender, friendly and compassionate disposition, and afford undeniable evidence of the reality of his divine prerogatives. He is, indeed, followed by vast multitudes, who behold his astonishing miracles, and hear the gra-



cious words, which proceed from his lips. Some of them, too, are persons, whose heart God has touched, and they are ready to follow him from a principle of love, whithersoever he goes. They are ready to bear their cross, and, if called to it, to suffer for his sake. But, how many others are of a different temper ! How many are utterly destitute of love, following him from motives of mere curiosity, or a sordid desire of temporal benefit ! How often are their fickle minds changed from showing an outward respect, to acts of open hostility ! What trivial circumstances blow up the latent fire of their enmity into flames of opposition ! How suddenly are their hosannas changed into, *Crucify him, Crucify him !* How often is he derided and jeered, insulted and mocked ! How often is he accused of being a devil, or in league with the devil, whose works he came to destroy ! How often is he charged with blasphemy, because he avows the dignity of his nature, and declares his equality with God ! How often do the words of plain and sober truth arouse the populace into rage and fury ; How ready are they to take up stones to stone him, or to lay violent hands on him, to cast him down the brow of the hill, that they may destroy him. Nor is this merely the result of ignorance, or confined to the vulgar populace. Men of learning, influence and authority are engaged in the same cause. Rulers combine against him, and conspire his death. At length the fatal hour arrives, in which the powers of darkness are suffered to triumph. He is betrayed into the hands of his enemies by a false hearted disciple. And as though a thief, or robber, he is apprehended by a band of armed men. He is carried before a tribunal of justice, not that justice may be done him, but that justice may be perverted ; and the basest cruelty, the most shocking wickedness, the most awful murder, which the world ever witnessed, might receive the sanction of judicial authority. Here he sustains a mock trial ; false witnesses are produced ; nothing criminal is testified against him even by these ; and yet during the pretended trial, the common civilities, to which the greatest criminals are entitled, are denied him. Unfeeling soldiers are allowed to insult and abuse him, as much as they please. He professes himself to be a king. In derision of this rightful claim, he is *crowned*—with a crown of thorns ; and arrayed in a gorgeous robe. He proclaims himself to be a prophet. In derision of this claim he is blinded—and smitten—and then a demand is made, that he should prophecy, who it was that smote him. Even his most benevolent miracles, which he wrought, in relieving the sick, and restoring the dead, are brought forward, to sharpen their satire, and give edge to their insults. “ He saved others, himself he cannot save.” In this situation, he gives his back to the smiters, and his cheek to them who pluck off the hair. He withholds not his face from shame and spitting. This wicked trial is concluded by a murderous sentence of condemnation. Nothing else can appease the popular cry of, “ Away with him,” “ Crucify him, Crucify him.” He is nailed to the cross—while his insolent persecutors cry, “ Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God ; let him deliver him now, if he will have him.” And even his *dying* agonies, they insult, by offering him vinegar and gall to drink. And thus, as it was expressed, in the parable, the husbandman took him, and killed him, and cast



him out of the vineyard. Was he not in this case, most certainly "despised and rejected of men?"

Well, you say, this case appears to be plain. These wicked Jews, it appears very evident, did despise and reject the Son of God. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But has he ever been so treated by any other people? Alas, happy should I be, could I answer this question in the negative, and tell you that the Son of God had never been crucified afresh, and put to an open shame. But truth will not justify such an answer. The truth, however, is what you need. Let me tell you, then, that in this respect, as in various other respects, "As in water, face answereth to face, so doth the heart of man to man." The Jews, though they were the ring leaders in the death of Christ, were not alone, in this awful transaction. For, the heathen, also, raged, and the people imagined a vain thing, against the Lord, and against his anointed. Against God's holy child Jesus, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles and people of Israel were gathered together. Nor is this all. Christ has also been "despised and rejected," by a great multitude, in every succeeding age. It is true, indeed, he has not been, literally, crucified and slain, in every age, in his own person; for, he has not been, personally in the world, and subjected to the power of wicked men. But the same spirit has been in men, and has manifested itself, in various ways, both among the open enemies of the cross of Christ, and too often among his pretended friends. It has been manifested towards the church of Christ. It has been manifested towards the institutions of Christ; particularly, towards the gospel; and the ministers of the gospel.

You remember a declaration of our Lord to his disciples, in which he said, "He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." And you know how common it has been among all nations, where the gospel has been preached, for mankind to despise and reject the ministers of Christ. Multitudes of them, in different ages and nations have been hated, persecuted, and even put to death, for their adherence to the Redeemer's cause. We need not go back to the apostolic age, to the reign of Nero, and the persecutions of the first ages of the church; neither need we in after ages confine ourselves to the cruel hostilities of papal Rome, for proof of this. We may rather look abroad upon the whole world, where the doctrines of the cross have been faithfully preached, and where pure religion has flourished. In all such places religion has had its enemies, and the ministers of the cross their opposers. The pure and self denying doctrines they have preached, have never been relished by the carnal heart; nor have men been willing to have their danger plainly disclosed. Those ministers, who have so far copied the example of their divine master, as to perform for their fellow men this unwelcome, but friendly service, have seldom failed of becoming odious in their sight. The real feelings of millions towards faithful ministers were correctly expressed by Ahab, in respect to the prophet Micaiah, "I hate him, for he prophesies no good concerning me, but evil." The benevolent prophet would gladly have prophesied good concerning Ahab; but the character of that wicked man was such, as gave the prophet no opportunity to do it. And yet the prophet was blamed and hated because he would not do it. Cases not unlike this have often occurred in relation to those, who faithfully preached the doctrines of Christ.



But in all such instances, the declaration of Christ applies, he that despiseth you despiseth me. In all such cases, therefore, Christ has been, himself, "despised and rejected of men." Indeed, Christ crucified, has been to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, in thousands and millions of instances, where there has been no direct persecution of himself, or of his followers. His doctrines and institutions have been neglected, his commands have been violated, his church and people have been despised, and his ministers ridiculed and contemned. But in all such cases, he has, most surely, been "despised and rejected of men."

Other considerations may be presented before you which clearly prove the same melancholly truth. Christ is presented to our view, in the scriptures, in several distinct characters, though all comprised in his being the Redeemer and Saviour of men. In all these characters, it is necessary that we should receive him, in order that we may be interested in his great salvation. The leading character, in which he is presented to mankind, and in which they are required to receive him, is that of a Saviour. It was the great object of his mission to save sinners. He was born a Saviour. His name, Jesus, was given him, because he should save his people from their sins. For this purpose he lived. For this purpose he died. He came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. We are assured, too, that there is no salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. It seems obviously to follow, that all, who do not receive him as their Saviour, however they may treat him in other respects, do really despise and reject him. Suppose, that while Jesus Christ was personally in the world, he had proposed himself to some individual, as the Saviour of men, and as being able and willing to become his Saviour. And suppose this man had professed some regard for him, in other respects; but had plainly assured him, that he could have nothing to do with him, as his Saviour; either on the ground, that he did not need any Saviour, besides himself; or, on the ground, that he could put no confidence in him to effect his salvation; or on the ground, that the terms of his salvation were such as he could not, or would not comply with. Suppose he had turned from him, and said, 'In this character, I can never have any thing to do with you. Your salvation, I can never receive.' Is it not plain, that this man must be viewed as despising and rejecting him? If then, men will now have nothing to do with Jesus Christ, considered as a Saviour, though they do not directly persecute, either himself, or his followers, yet do they not despise and reject him? But, who does not know, that there are many among men, who will have nothing to do with Christ considered as their Saviour? Are there not many, who even avow their infidelity, in this respect, and openly declare, that they cannot receive him, in this character? And are there not many more, who practically declare they cannot so receive him? And do they not, certainly, despise and reject him? Is he not undervalued and meanly esteemed by them, even in that character, which is one of his highest glories?

But, as a Saviour, Christ has performed several distinct offices, in which it seems needful to receive him, that we may not be chargeable with despising and rejecting him. He is represented as a priest, to atone for our offences, and to make intercession for us, with God the



**Father.** "He is the propitiation for our sins." "In him we have redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." He is, also, our advocate with the Father. That he should act as our high priest, seems evidently to have been necessary to our salvation. For, without shedding of blood, there could be no remission. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." And it is in his name, alone, that we have access, by one spirit, unto the Father. Now, if men will despise and reject the atonement of Christ; if they place no dependence on his precious blood, to atone for their offences, and procure for them the forgiveness of sins; or if they will not come unto the Father, in his name, to seek for needed blessings, do they not evidently despise and reject him? Do they not lightly esteem his priestly character, and greatly undervalue his meditation and atonement?

In acting the part of a Saviour, too, Christ has communicated much important instruction, appearing in the character of a teacher, come from God. He taught the way of God truly, and showed unto men the way of salvation. Now, if men utterly refuse to receive his instructions, on those points which concern their salvation; if they will not assent to the plain and important truths, which *he* taught, concerning their own character and state; concerning a necessary change in the temper of their heart; concerning himself, and concerning the way of salvation by him; does it not appear plain, that they reject and despise him? Do they not lightly esteem his instructions, and affect to be wiser than their Teacher?

Christ, in bringing salvation to men, has proposed to them certain terms, a compliance with which is indispensable, that he may be, to them, a Saviour indeed. They must, for example, exercise repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and they must exhibit evidence of their repentance and faith, by corresponding fruits of holiness. They must, in short, repent and do works meet for repentance. Without this, there can be no real interest in his salvation. For, except men repent, they shall perish. If they believe not, they shall die in their sins. And without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Now, if Christ comes to men as a Saviour, and proposes salvation to them, on these reasonable and gracious terms, and yet they refuse to comply, and turn away, and remain uninterested in his salvation, do they not certainly despise and reject him? Suppose, for example, Christ should come, in person, to a profane swearer, or a drunkard, or a thief, or a liar, or any notorious transgressor, and propose to become his Saviour, if he will truly repent, and turn from all his wickedness, and receive him by a lively faith, as his Saviour? And suppose this wicked person should turn directly away, and immediately commit, even under the eye of the Saviour, some daring act of wickedness; and go on from day to day in his rebellious course? Who does not see, that such a man would despise and reject the Son of God? Now, *such are* the terms of salvation, made known to men in the gospel. And though Christ does not now come to sinners, in person, as he did once, in the days of his flesh; yet, under the light of the gospel, he has made known these terms very explicitly, both in the Bible, and by his ministering servants. He proposes to become the Saviour of any sinner, on the same terms, that he would, if he were personally present.



He is, also, just as able, and just as ready, to fulfil the engagement. If, then, sinners now turn from the Bible, or turn from the preaching of the gospel, and continue in sin, do they not still despise and reject him, considered as a Saviour, as really, and as certainly, as though he were personally present, and they then treated his proposal in the same manner?

But, it is not to those sinners, who are more notorious for their wickedness, only, that Christ proposes to become a Saviour, on the same terms. To those, who are more decent, in their manners, and morals he makes the same offer; assuring them also, that "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and, except they repent they must perish. And if these, again, marvelling that it should be thought necessary for them to become the subjects of such a change, turn away and refuse salvation upon these terms, is it not plain, still, that they despise and reject him?

The Lord Jesus Christ is presented to us, in the holy scriptures, as being worthy of our highest respect, and most affectionate regard. To all, therefore, who duly receive and respect him, he is very precious; he appears as the chief among ten thousands, as altogether lovely. Hence, by all, who do not, in some measure, thus receive him, he is really greatly undervalued, and treated disrespectfully. He is even despised and rejected. Do you not perceive, then, that he is certainly thus treated, by the great majority of mankind? When attending to the reasonableness of the expectation, that the Son of God would be treated with respect and reverence, you, perhaps, were ready to conclude, that you, at least, would not fail thus to treat him. You would, perhaps, scarcely have admitted the thought, that you were capable of rejecting and despising such a glorious person, coming to you, on such a gracious and benevolent errand. But, after all, is there not great reason to apprehend, that even you, are, at this moment, among those who despise and reject him? It is vain, to plead, that Christ has never come to you. Though he has not been personally among you, as he once was in Judea, he has been among you in his word, in his ordinances, and in the ministration of the gospel. He has been presented to you as an all sufficient Saviour; nay, he has offered to be *your* Saviour. His instructions you have heard. The terms of his salvation have been declared to you. Hundreds of times you have been tenderly invited to come unto him and be saved. Will you, then, say, that you have treated him, in character, with reverence and respect? Let me ask you then, seriously, whether you have indeed received Christ, whether you have ever welcomed him with gratitude and joy as your Saviour. Feeling that you were in yourselves, utterly lost and undone, deserving of endless banishment from the presence of the Lord, despairing of ever doing any thing to effect your own salvation, have you indeed, humbly, penitently, and believingly, cast yourselves upon the mercy of God, in Christ, and rested all your hopes of salvation there? Is he really precious to your souls? Does he appear to you the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely? Do you love his glorious person? Do you love his character? Do you love his institutions? Do you love his salvation? Do you love his service? If you say you do, let me ask you further, what *evidence* you have, that your hearts are thus drawn out in love to him? That you esteem him precious? Are your thoughts tenderly, and affectionately, and frequently placed



upon this glorious Saviour? Do you delight to call him to affectionate and grateful remembrance, as it were, continually? Do you love to meditate, and converse upon him, and upon what he has done and suffered for your salvation? Do you love to hold converse with his friends, concerning the glories of his person, the wonders of his love, and the blessedness of his people? When your attention is called to what he has done and suffered for you, do your hearts burn within you with holy affection? And are you, indeed, conscientiously obedient to his commands, and do you carefully observe his ordinances? For you know that he has, himself, left us this test of our love to him. "If any man love me he will keep my words." "Then are ye my disciples, if ye keep my commandments." Do you exhibit this evidence of your love? Another criterion, which he has given us is *love to the brethren*, his dear disciples. Said he, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another?" And said his beloved apostle, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Have you this evidence of your love, of your discipleship? Do you truly love one another? Do you love the brethren? Is the religion and service of Christ, the main business of your lives? And does it grieve you, that you can do no more for his glory? Does it grieve you that you ever did any thing to dishonor him? Is sin a burden to you, considered as the evil and bitter thing, which subjected him to suffering and death; and is it your earnest desire, that you may dishonor and wound him no more, by this evil and bitter thing? Alas, when you enquire after these evidences of your love, of your respect for the Son of God, does not the evidence overwhelmingly turn against you? Do you not find, that instead of being precious to you, the chief among ten thousand, he has really, in your view, no form nor comeliness; no beauty that you should desire him? Is it not certain, that your thoughts are even never affectionately placed upon him? Do not the world, and the things that are in the world, engross your affections, so as to leave no room for this glorious and lovely Saviour? Do you not perceive that you have never penitently cast yourselves upon the mercy of God, in him for salvation? Do you not know, that you do not keep his commandments; and that you do not love his service, his ordinances, and his disciples? That you have never obeyed, and never been prepared to take any satisfaction in obeying, his dying command, "This do in remembrance of me." Would not his service be a burden to you? And do you not choose to keep him almost entirely out of all your thoughts? Do not your consciences this moment tell you, that there are a thousand things in the world, on which you now place a higher value, than on Christ and his salvation? If it were proposed to your choice, to spend a little season, in some splendid amusement, or in some sensual indulgence, or where you might gain a small portion of property, on the one hand; or to spend it in attending to religion, in conversing with the Lord's people, in social prayer, or at the communion table, with Christ and his friends, which would have the preference? Is not the answer such as must flash conviction upon your consciences, that even by you, Christ is despised and rejected? Can any thing be more certain than that Christ is despised and rejected by the man, who turns his back upon his service and his salvation, on account of the love which he yet has for the



vanities of the world, and the pleasures of sin? Ye cannot serve God and mammon, Christ and Belial.

But if the evidence is clear that you have despised, and that you still despise the Son of God, can you avoid the conviction, that your guilt is exceedingly great? Can you despise this glorious Saviour, and this great salvation, without incurring great guilt? Indeed, have not your consciences already decided this question against you? You have despised Christ, and you have despised him who sent him. You have despised his calls. You have despised his instructions. You have despised his blood. You have despised and rejected his offered salvation. What, then, must the end of these things be? What a dreadful punishment must await you? Will not God, indeed, destroy those miserable men who dare to despise and reject his beloved Son? He that despised Moses' law died without mercy; "Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who has despised and trodden under foot the Son of God!" How shall you escape. You have neglected a great salvation; and how shall you now escape? Blessed be God, great as your guilt is, the door of mercy is not yet closed against you. The Son of God yet graciously waits to become your Saviour. Though so long rejected and despised, he still invites, Come unto me and you shall find rest. O what love! What tenderness! What compassion! Tho' so long despised, he still waits to bestow salvation upon you. But remember, he cannot—he will not always wait. Remember, too, he can be no Saviour to you while you continue to reject and despise him. If he ever saves you, you must be brought to treat him very differently. You must love, you must receive, you must obey him, whom now you despise and reject. You must love him most fervently, you must receive him most thankfully, you must obey him most heartily. In no other way will he be your Saviour. And if he does not save you, who will? Who can? If he is against you (as he must, if you continue to despise him) if he is against you, who can be for you? Surely, there can be no salvation for those, whom the love of Christ will not save. Be entreated, then, as you value the salvation of your souls, be entreated to despise and reject him no longer. But, even now, come unto him, come humbly, acknowledging your past ingratitude and wickedness, come penitently, and in faith and love, to this Saviour; come, and you shall yet find rest to your souls. "To day, if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts."

JASPER.

---

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

THE STANDARD LIFTED UP AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF ZION.

Christians have every thing to animate them, in their exertions to advance the cause of religion. For if it were doubtful, whether this cause would ultimately succeed, it would still be glorious to fail in an attempt to promote it. For it involves the glory of God, and the highest interests of men, for time and eternity. There are undertakings of such a nature, that if they are accomplished, indelible disgrace must attend the accomplishment of them. Whether the wicked, are for a



time, successful in their opposition to the cause of truth, or whether they immediately fail of the object, they have in view, shame must in either case, be their portion. But while the cause in which christians are engaged, is such, that it would be a real honor to fail in attempts to promote it ; it is one, whose ultimate prosperity is rendered infallibly certain. It has omnipotence on its side, and must therefore prevail and triumph. It has indeed many enemies associated to stop its progress, but all their exertions will prove ineffectual. Their deep laid plans will be disconcerted, and all their raised expectations of success will end in disappointment. For, "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Though these words, as appears probable from the connexion, refer to an event, which has not yet taken place ; yet they seem to contain a maxim of the divine government, which has been verified in every age of the church. Though the Lord has often permitted her enemies to afflict her, yet his designs and theirs have been diametrically opposite. While they have aimed at her extirpation, he has aimed at her purification, the extension of her limits, the multiplication of her numbers, and the increase of her prosperity. Under the influence of his providence and grace, all the calamities, which wicked men, and apostate angels have brought upon the church, have proved the means of promoting her welfare. From her severest afflictions her choicest blessings have arisen, and the darkest times she has ever seen, have preceded, and portended, the dawning rays of the brightest light she has ever enjoyed. View the church in the land of Egypt, under the oppression of haughty Pharaoh. How exactly did she resemble the bush, that Moses beheld burning in the mount. The people of God seemed to be wholly in the power of their enemies ; and no doubt Satan exulted in the prospect of their ruin. But when the enemy came in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him. The arm of Jehovah was revealed, and salvation wrought.

Thus it was also in the days of Elijah. The civil power was armed against the cause of God. Jezebel had slain all the prophets of the Lord, whom she could apprehend. Even Elijah caught the spirit of despondency, and exclaimed, "I, even *I only*, am left and they seek my life to take it away." "But what saith the answer of God unto him ? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." By the ministry of Elisha, religion was revived ; and under the government of Jehu, the worship of Baal was extirpated.

Look at the state of the church in the days of Hezekiah. When he ascended the throne, he found religion almost extinct, and the land overspread with idolatry and superstition. He immediately set himself to promote a reformation ; and by the blessing of God, his exertions were crowned with wonderful success. But while these things were accomplishing, the enemy, from abroad, came in like a flood, and threatened universal desolation. Senacheribb, who neither feared God nor regarded man, avowed his determination to treat Jehovah and his worshippers, as he had treated the idols of the surrounding nations, and their infatuated votaries. But when, in human view, there was every prospect of his success, his designs were suddenly blasted. "The angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred and four-score and five thousand : and when they



arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." Well might the prophet, in reference to this event, say, "The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters; but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased like the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like the thistle-down before the whirlwind. At the time of evening, behold, terror! Before the morning, and he is no more! This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us."

Look at the state of the church, when her Divine Lord, having been condemned and executed as a malefactor, lay cold and lifeless in the gloomy mansions of the tomb; when one of his own disciples had betrayed him, another denied him, and the rest panic-struck, had forsaken him and fled; and when the hopes of his followers were extinguished by his death. How dark the cloud that hung over the church, and how complete, *apparently*, the triumph of her enemies! But from this darkness her brightest light arose, and her greatest splendor broke forth from her deepest obscurity. Her Divine Lord burst the bands of death; and, having given commission to his disciples, "on a bright cloud," as in a triumphal chariot, "to heaven he rode;" sent down the spirit of his grace, overpowering all opposition; multiplied the number of his followers, and erected his kingdom where Satan, from time immemorial, had maintained his cruel throne undisturbed.

Look at the state of the church when the sword of the civil magistrate was unsheathed against her, and such multitudes of her members murdered, that her enemies boasted, that they had extirpated the execrable superstition of the christians. Vain and presumptuous boast! The blood of martyrs became the seed of the church, and from the ashes of those, that had been consumed in the flames, for the word of God, and for the testimony, which they hold, a tenfold increase of christians proceeded, to support the standard, and multiply the triumphs of the cross; until at length the idolatry of pagan Rome fell prostrate before the light of the Gospel, and the idols of that extensive empire were "cast to the moles and the bats."

And not to multiply instances; look once more at the state of the church a few years since, when infidelity had erected her standard, and intoxicated with a temporary success, ventured to predict that the downfall of the Bible was at hand; and that within thirty years it would sink into oblivion. The period has elapsed; and where is the accomplishment of the prediction? Is it to be seen in the numerous Bible Societies, and in the spirited and increasing efforts that are making to spread the word of life? Where is now Paine's "Age of Reason," from which so much was fondly anticipated? Sunk into the contempt, that it deserves; and remembered only as a monument of the folly, and impiety, of the unhappy man who wrote it.

Thus infidelity, though threatening for a time the very existence of the church, has under the overruling providence of God, proved the means of enlarging her bounds, and augmenting her prosperity. *When the enemy came in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him.* To the flaming zeal, the daring efforts, and the rapid success of infidelity, we are, in all probability, under God, indebted for the numerous Missionary, Bible, and Tract Societies which are in successful operation, in almost every part of the christian world; and



whose efforts, we trust, will continue to increase till the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the seas.

Thus the church dwells, and shall continue to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. No weapon formed against her shall prosper; and every tongue, that shall rise in judgment against her, shall be condemned. Let then the children of Zion dismiss their fears, and be joyful in their King. For in spite of the united efforts of earth and hell, the church must, and will, live through every age, "and be the Almighty's care."

YODH.

---

FOR THE EVANGELIST.

EXPOSITION OF EZEKIEL xviii. 2.

MR. EDITOR,

I have lately been reading the sermon of the Rev. Dr. Beecher, on "the faith once delivered to the saints." In the main, it appears to me a production of no ordinary value. But, like most other human productions, it has, no doubt, some imperfections. One of these, it is apprehended, may be found in a very strange and unnatural misinterpretation and misapplication of the Jewish proverb of the sour grapes, Ezekiel xviii. 2. Will you allow me, in your valuable publication, to endeavour to correct the mistake?

The learned author says, "The ancient faith included an article which led the wicked, among the Jews, to extenuate their crimes by the allegation, *The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge*; i. e. 'Sin in man is a physical property, transmitted from father to son as bones and sinews are, and alike inconsistent with choice or blame.' And is not the objection urged against the doctrine of original sin, as contained in the evangelical system, the same?" Now, that "the wicked among the Jews," in common with wicked men generally, were disposed "to extenuate their crimes," is not to be denied. Nor is it improbable that they sometimes perverted "the doctrine of original sin," for this purpose. But, that this was the purport of "*the allegation, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge*," to me, at least, does not appear. That it may apply to this subject, the import of the proverb is made to be, that "Sin in man is a physical property, transmitted from father to son as bones and sinews are, and alike inconsistent with choice or blame." But what is there, either in the language of the proverb itself, or in all that is said to repel the allegation which it contains, to justify this construction? Surely, nothing. The proverb is expressive of a *cause*, and of a *painful effect*, produced by this cause. The cause is, *eating sour grapes*. The painful effect is, *the setting of teeth on edge*. But the complaint of those who used the proverb was, that the *cause* was found in the *fathers*, and the *effect* was produced in the *children*. The plain import of the proverb, then, is, not that "Sin in man is a physical property, transmitted from father to son as bones and sinews are, and alike inconsistent with choice or blame;" but, that 'the fa-



thers have done wickedly, and the children are punished for their wickedness.'

Not only does this seem to be the obvious meaning of the proverb itself; but this is plainly the accusation, which the Lord meets and repels, in the subsequent verse. There is not a word in the declarations made, or in the cases stated, which appears to have any direct bearing upon the allegation, that "Sin is a physical property, transmitted from father to son as bones and sinews are, and alike inconsistent with choice or blame;" but it all bears, directly, upon the accusation, that 'the children are punished for the wickedness of the fathers.'

In answering to the charge brought against him, the Lord first declares, *All souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth it shall die.* Then he describes the character of a righteous man, one who *hath walked in his statutes, and kept his judgments, to deal truly*; and, in conclusion he says, *He is just, he shall surely live.* Next, a son of this good man is brought into view, who *is a robber, a shedder of blood*, and gives himself up to work almost every abomination; and of him it is said, *he shall not live; he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.* Then the case of a son of this wicked man is stated, who *seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like*, but walks in the statutes and ordinances of the Lord; and of him it is declared, *He shall not die for the iniquity of his father; he shall surely live.* The objector is then introduced again, as demanding, in support of his accusation, *Why? Doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?* To which the Lord answers, *When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon HIM, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon HIM.*

Such is the manner in which the Lord has repelled the charge brought against him, by the use of the proverb which has been considered; and surely the charge thus repelled, must be, that he had punished the children for the wickedness of their fathers.

If any apology is necessary for so lengthy a discussion of so plain a subject, it is hoped a sufficient one may be found in the circumstance, that even Dr. Beecher seems obviously to have mistaken the true import of the proverb.

TROPHIMUS.

---

*Be not righteous overmuch; neither make thyself overwise; why shouldst thou destroy thyself? Be not overmuch wicked; neither be thou foolish; why shouldst thou die before thy time? It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this; yea also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.—Eccles. vii. 16—18.*

Persons who relish not nor study the word of God as a whole, have often particular parts of it which they like; favourite texts, such as when severed from their connexion, and regarded in their sound rather than their sense, appear to suit their preconceived opinions, and pre-



valent desires. These little insulated scraps of scripture, misunderstood and perverted, and applied to purposes the very opposite of the Divine intention, obtain a free currency amongst multitudes of people, many of whom perhaps never read them in their Bibles, but have got them at second hand as maxims of high authority ; and they are quoted on all occasions, and referred to with the easy confidence of a Geometrician quoting his axioms. In this and in many other ways, the word of God meets with treatment, which would be resented as an insult by any human author ; being made to express sentiments in perfect contrariety to its general spirit, and even to its most explicit declarations.

Few texts (perhaps I might say none) have ever been in such general favour, have ever been caught at, and circulated, and appealed to with approbation, by so great a variety of characters, as the first clause of the sixteenth verse,—“ Be not righteous overmuch ”—Its grand recommendation lies in its being so *undefined*, susceptible of so many shades of meaning ; prescribing no precise boundaries, but leaving matters conveniently at large, and thus affording latitude for every man to fix his own standard, (and even that may be very fluctuating,) and then to appeal to scripture against all who go beyond him, as exceeding reasonable bounds, and being “ righteous overmuch.” For it is surprising how men who hate the Bible in its great truths and requirements, will yet quote its words, nay, even plead for its authority, when it can be made by any perversion, to accord with their own inclinations.

The saying is a favourite one with the profligate, who, in cursing the enthusiasm and hypocrisy of others, vainly fancies that he is vindicating his own vice and folly ; and who reckons it quite a sufficient reason for rejecting with scorn a serious and salutary advice, that it comes from one whom all must allow to be—“ righteous overmuch.”

Often on the other hand is it appealed to by the man of morality, who, with stern severity, condemns the profligate, but who piques himself on his own sobriety, honesty, industry, kindness and general decency of character ; and making this external virtue his religion, though without a single sentiment or emotion of inward godliness, considers every thing beyond it as being—“ righteous overmuch.”

Many who are equally destitute of the true spirit of religion, who feel its services an irksome drudgery, whose secret language in them all is, “ What a weariness is it ! ” and who therefore satisfy their consciences with very flimsy apologies for the neglect of them, are even ready to pronounce those “ righteous overmuch,” who cannot see their excuses in the same satisfactory light with themselves.

This admonition too is a weapon in constant use with the thousands, whose religion consists in the strict observance of its outward forms, in their appropriate times and places. They would not for the world be missed out of their pew on a Sabbath day, and with even greater reluctance on certain days of human institution. But they are clear for keeping religion to its proper place. This is a topic on which they continually insist ; a species of *propriety* which, in company with a smile of self complacency, is forever on their lips. It is all well, if a man minds religion on its own appropriate day, and attends to his business the rest of the week. These things must not be made to clash. “ Six days of the week shalt thou labour, and one thou shalt rest,”



are God's own prescriptions ;—and the Bible itself enjoins us not to be “righteous overmuch.”

But there are none to whom this favourite caution is of more essential service than those professors of religion, of whom, alas ! the number is not small, who, disliking the “offence of the cross” are desirous to keep on good terms both with Christ and the world, and who cover from others, and try to cover from themselves, the real principle of their conduct, by prudential maxims of imposing plausibility, and some of them in the terms of Scripture. The wisdom of the serpent, they say, is recommended to us, as well as the harmlessness of the dove. They cannot see the use of exposing themselves and their religion to needless derision. They are ever mightily afraid, lest, by the over-strictness and uncomplying spirit of its professors, men should be led to form gloomy notions of the gospel, as a system of morose and puritanical austerity. “We must needs go out of the world,” they allege, “if we are to take no part in its pleasures.”—Under the pretext of recommending religion, such persons meet the world half-way ; they join in its follies and vain amusements ; they rather court than shun its intercourse ; and they sanction their unseemly compliances by an appeal to the admonition before us ; regarding the reproach cast upon others, who think a more decided, and marked separation from the world their duty, as brought upon themselves by their own imprudence,—by carrying matters to far,—by being “righteous overmuch.”

A passage of Scripture that has been so much abused, and of which the abuse is so extensively prejudicial, it is of great importance rightly to understand ; and, before noticing any of the different views that have been taken of it, I shall state what to me appears to be its true meaning.

The whole passage seems to be an instance of serious and impressive IRONY : of which the subject is, the line of conduct most prudent to be pursued, supposing the end in view to be the securing of favour, honour and prosperity in the world.—Thus :—“There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.” If, therefore you wish to avoid the enmity of the world with its mischievous and sometimes deadly consequences and insure success, honour, long life,—“be not righteous overmuch ;—remember that religion is a matter in which men in general, are particularly fond of moderation ; and beware of assuming an appearance of sanctity greater than the world is disposed to approve of, or bear with. “Neither make thyself overwise ; why shouldest thou destroy thyself?” Recollect that the same feelings of envy and malignant jealousy may be excited, as they very often have been, by high degrees of superior intelligence and wisdom. Be not obtrusive, therefore with your eminent endowments.—Deal prudently. Be cautious of exasperating the jealous pride of others. Besides the risks that arise from envy, such qualities may bring you often into the critical situation of an arbitrator ; in which you must unavoidably expose yourself to the resentment of one or the other of the parties, and possibly even of both. And from various other sources, danger may arise to you.—But at the same time beware.—Similar effects may be produced by opposite causes. Although men do not like overmuch religion, you must be on your guard, on the other hand, against the extreme of wickedness :—“Be not overmuch wicked.” You will expose your-



self to suspicion and hatred as a dangerous member of society ;—men will become your enemies from fear, and will think they confer a benefit on the community, by making riddance of you : nay, in the excess of riotous and unbridled profligacy, you may be betrayed into deeds which may awaken the vengeance of human laws, and bring you to an untimely end. Let prudent consideration, then, set bounds to your licentiousness :—“ Neither be thou foolish ; why shouldest thou die before thy time ?” As there are hazards attending high pretensions to wisdom, so are there risks peculiar to folly. The absolute fool becomes the object of contempt. His life is hardly thought worth an effort, far less a sacrifice for its preservation. The fool is easily made the tool and dupe of a party ; exposing himself to be the prey of virulent enemies, or of selfish pretended friends. Folly leads a man into innumerable scrapes. It may induce him heedlessly to mix with wicked associates, and may thus as indeed has many a time happened, occasion his suffering for crimes, in the perpetration of which he had no active hand, and which, fool as he is, he would shrink from committing. And in numberless ways he may come, by his folly, to “ die before his time.” If, therefore, I repeat, your object be to shun the world’s enmity, with its possible and probable effects, and to secure the world’s favour, with its desirable accompaniments and consequences, take care of these extremes ;—as “ there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness,—be not righteous overmuch ; neither make thyself overwise ; why shouldest thou destroy thyself ?”—And though “ a wicked man” may, and sometimes does, “ prolong his life in his wickedness” yet “ be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish ; why shouldest thou die before thy time ?”

All scripture irony is serious, and intended to impress on the mind important lessons. The passage is in this respect similar to that striking one towards the close of the book : “ Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart and in the sight of thine eyes :—But know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.” So here the admonition closes with an impressive recommendation of the fear of the Lord as the best and only means of inspiring true peace and tranquil security of mind, as a sovereign antidote against the fear of man, and a powerful incentive to the faithful and firm discharge of duty in every situation :—verse 18. “ It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this ; yea, also from this withhold not thy hand ; for HE THAT FEARETH GOD SHALL COME FORTH OF THEM ALL.”

In vindication of the general principle which I have adopted for explanation of this passage, let it now be observed, *in the first place* : The motives which Solomon employs to recommend and enforce his advice, evidently shew, that in the fifteenth verse, when he speaks of “ a righteous man perishing in his righteousness, and a wicked man prolonging his life in his wickedness,” he refers not directly to the conduct of providence, but to the consequences arising to the righteous and the wicked, from the feelings of mankind towards them : for, in the ordinary administration of God, the duration of human life does not appear to be at all regulated by the characters of men.

*Secondly.* If the counsel, “ Be not righteous overmuch” means, that it is our duty to be righteous, but that we should beware of excess in righteousness ; then the opposite counsel, “ Be not overmuch



wicked," if taken seriously, (that is, as having nothing in it of the nature of irony,) must, on the same principle of interpretation, be understood to signify, that we may be wicked, provided we take due care not to exceed, or go beyond bounds in our wickedness. But this surely can never be the counsel of the word of God. Every reader of the Bible will be instantly sensible how much it is out of unison with the universal tenor of its sentiment and phraseology.

*Thirdly.* Righteousness, when opposed, as it is here, to wickedness, usually means, in scripture language, true religion in general, in all its various branches of principle and practice; the entire profession and course of conduct of a good man. In this enlarged sense I understand it here; and this makes me dissatisfied with other interpretations of the passage.

Some consider righteousness as referring particularly to the exercise of justice, and the admonition not to be "righteous overmuch" as a caution against the overrigid application of the principles of equity, pressing every thing to an extreme, never tempering justice with clemency but exacting satisfaction and punishment without mercy, on all occasions, even for the most trivial faults.—But if righteousness mean simply justice, then wickedness must mean simply injustice; and if "be not righteous overmuch" be a warning against the extreme of justice, "be not overwicked" must be a warning against the extreme of injustice; a warning which we certainly should not expect to find in that book, which admits of no compromise between right and wrong, and whose sentence is, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in that which is much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."\* Those who have adopted the interpretation I am speaking of, have not, I think, sufficiently attended to the *antithesis* in the passage; nor duly considered that the true principle of the interpretation, whatever it may be, ought to apply, with equal fairness and ease, to both sides of it. There is reason indeed to think that the counsel "be not righteous overmuch" is quoted by multitudes without the most distant recollection, and by not a few without even the knowledge, of its being followed immediately by the admonition not to be "overmuch wicked."

Others understanding the terms "righteous" and "wicked," as I think they ought to be understood, in their more general acceptation, and at the same time conceiving "Be not righteous overmuch" to be Solomon's serious counsel, cannot, however, deny, that of true righteousness, of real religion, of genuine unsophisticated goodness, there cannot be excess. They are therefore under the necessity of qualifying and restricting after all. Some of them explain the words as a caution against *intemperate zeal*, exerting itself indiscreetly, contentiously, and to the injury of religion:—Some, as a warning against a *blind and bigoted superstition*, displaying itself in an excessive attachment to rites and ceremonies of human invention, or even, it may be, to external institutions of Divine appointment, whilst the spirit of vital godliness is entirely or in a great measure overlooked; others as an admonition against needless *scrupulosity* about trifles; a want of proper discrimination between smaller and greater matters, between what

\* Luke, xvi. 10.



have been termed essentials, and non-essentials; from which have arisen the hottest contentions, and numberless unnecessary schisms.

Of all these and other interpretations of a similar kind that might be noticed, it may be observed in general:—First, that these things are not properly righteousness; but the mere adjuncts, and unjustifiable accompaniments or counterfeits of righteousness: and secondly, that if such things are meant in the exhortation, “Be not righteous overmuch,” it will follow, that what is said, in the verse preceding, of the “righteous man perishing in his righteousness,” must be considered as expressing, not the consequence of his real godliness itself, but of his imprudent profession and practice, or his needlessly ostentatious display of it.—But this certainly is not what Solomon means, when he contrasts the “righteous perishing in his righteousness,” and “the wicked prolonging his life in his wickedness.”

Considering righteousness, then in its proper sense, in the sense in which it is generally used in the Bible, I must repeat what was before hinted, that no man who is conversant in the contents of that blessed volume, can for a moment admit the idea of its containing any thing against the excess of it;—the excess of true religion and moral obedience. Were such excess possible, surely it is not the side on which we are in danger of erring, and require to be seriously admonished.—Shall we warn him against too much spirituality of mind, who feels himself by nature “carnal, sold under sin,” and in whose bosom the “law of sin” is incessantly striving against the “law of his mind?” Shall we put him on his guard against allowing the love of God, the comprehensive principle of all righteousness, to occupy too much of his heart, whose nature is enmity against him? Shall we caution against looking too constantly at the things which are unseen and eternal, a creature whose propensities are so powerful to seek his portion in the things that are seen and temporal; who feels his affections drawn downward, and bound to the earth? How preposterous the thought, of warning a sinful creature against the excess of holiness! a selfish creature against the excess of benevolence and integrity! an earthly minded creature against too intimate fellowship with heaven! a creature surrounded with temptations to equivocate between God and the world, and who carries about with him principles of the old man to which, alas! these temptations are too congenial, against a profession and conduct too decided on the part of God and of godliness! a creature who is so much in danger of seeking glory from men, against estimating too highly, or coveting too eagerly, the honour that cometh from God only! a creature, in a word, that has so many sadly prevailing tendencies to the entire dereliction of righteousness, against being “righteous overmuch.”

*Lastly.* The whole of the language of the Divine word, in describing the characters at which God’s people ought continually to aim, is fitted to impress on every mind the *impossibility* of the dreaded excess,—of being “righteous overmuch.” Let a few passages suffice as a specimen of many.—“If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” “Whosoever hath this hope in him,” (in Christ;—namely, the hope of seeing him as he is and being like him,) “purifieth himself even as he is pure.” “Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do: forgetting the things which are behind, and



reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service: and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."—"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "The friendship of the world is enmity with God; whosoever, therefore, will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God." "Having, therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all pollution of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, fortitude, and to fortitude, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." "For none of us liveth to himself, and none of us dieth to himself; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."\* These passages which are only an exemplification of the correct phraseology of the Bible on the subject of Christian holiness, express a spirituality, a decision, and self denial, a universality, perseverance and progress, of practical obedience, utterly inconsistent with any caution against the danger of excess, and admonitions to moderation. Of such sedatives, alas! we stand in no need. All the exciting stimulants that can be applied to our minds, are few enough, and weak enough, to keep us on the alert against the temptations of the world, and live to the great ends of our being. The sinless perfection of our nature, is the object of commanded pursuit and of promised attainment. We can never, even in a future world go beyond this; and in the present world, bearing about with us to the end the corruption of the old man, we can never reach it. We can never exceed the requirements of the precepts I have been repeating. To be "righteous overmuch," is an impossibility.

Let men, then, beware of wresting and abusing the Scriptures, to their own delusion and ruin.—It is a very sure evidence of a man's not being decidedly righteous at all, when he is particularly fond of the caution (misinterpreted, as in that case we are certain it must be)—"not to be righteous overmuch:" a caution which is often repeated, with a sneer of malicious satisfaction, by men in whose eyes, all real, heartfelt, spiritual religion, all scriptural godliness, is held as enthusiasm and madness;—that religion, I mean, which mourns for sin in deep self abasement; which loves the Saviour supremely; which is addicted to reading the Bible, to prayer and communion with God; which counts the Sabbath a delight;—which shrinks with a delicate tender conscience from even the appearance of evil; which ceases to have

\* 2 Cor. v. 17. 1 John iii. 3. Phil. iii. 13; 14. Col. iii. 2. Rom. xii. 1, 2. Gal. v. 24. 1 John ii. 15. Matt. vi. 24. James iv. 4. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 2 Pet. i. 5—7. Rom. xiv. 7, 8.



pleasure in the empty vanities, the time-and-soul-killing follies of a passing world, and weeps in pity for those who have ; which seeks to enjoy God in all things, and all things in God.

My friends, this subject is serious,—deeply serious ; worthy of being in earnest about. Either you must belong to the people of God, or to the world : and the time is coming when this distinction shall be announced with awful solemnity, and shall be fixed with its consequences on either side, in eternal permanence.

With easy lightness of heart, and scornful rejection of serious counsel from those who feel the weight of religious truth, and the sacredness of religious duty, you talk of “not being righteous overmuch ;” and you thus cloak, under a Bible phrase, your deplorable regardlessness of the Bible’s most important discoveries and most imperative obligations. You spurn its pure and elevated sanctities away from you, and, with infatuated thoughtlessness, allege its own authority for doing so. But you do not read your Bible, else you never would talk thus. O my friends do bethink yourselves. A sinful creature “righteous overmuch !” a sinner too good ! Can you, in your consciences, believe, that the word of God seriously warns you against the danger of this ? If not, O beware of perverting a Divine counsel :—beware of doing with the word of the Eternal God what you would resent as an insult were it done with your own.

“There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not.” There is not therefore a just man upon earth that can stand accepted before God on the ground of his own righteousness. Such is the character of that Being with whom we have to do, and such the righteousness of his perfect law, that nothing but a sinless righteousness can procure acceptance at his bar. Such a righteousness is not to be found in fallen man. And the very first, and most distinctive feature, in the character of the renewed, is the entire renunciation of all dependence on their own doings, and a simple-hearted reliance on the perfect righteousness,—the obedience, atonement, and intercession, of the Son of God. All of them are ready to say, with deep prostration of soul before God, “If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand ?”—“Enter not into judgment with thy servant ; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified ;” “God be merciful to me a sinner !”

Forget not at the same time, that personal righteousness, “walking in newness of life,” is the only unequivocal evidence of interest, by faith, in the righteousness of the Redeemer. Therefore let Christians implore with earnestness and constancy, the influences of the Spirit of God, at once to deepen their sense of sinfulness, and at the same time, to maintain in full vigour in their souls the “fear of God ;” that by this wisdom they may be brought through all temptation, may come forth, victorious, from all opposition, and untainted, from all the corrupting influence of an evil world ;—that they may manifest in increasing holiness the increasing power of this sacred principle ;—that they may not be “led away by the error of the wicked, and so fall from their own steadfastness, but may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Let it be their constant desire and aim, to be righteous *more and more* ; never thinking that they have already attained, or that they are already perfect.” Let them “follow holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.”—*Religious Monitor.*



## QUESTION.

*Should many preachers be employed in the same place, in a time of special awakening?*

The harvest is great, and the laborers are few ; many therefore cannot properly be spared for one field, while others lie deserted or neglected. It is more agreeable to labor, where God is himself at work, than in the midst of a general stupidity. But the stupid people have the greater need of the warnings of the gospel ; and usefulness is the great object of the christian minister, rather than his own gratification. No more, therefore, should flock into a place where showers of mercy are descending, than the necessities of the people require. Let others make a short visit among them, catch the spirit of the revival, and carry it to their respective places of labor. If but few additional meetings are requisite in time of revival ; if continual preaching or conversation be unprofitable to alarmed and convicted sinners, then the necessities of the people do not require a multiplication of laborers. Their stated pastor or preacher, if he be favored with good health, and be competent to the office of a minister of the word, can do the greater part of what is required, in a congregation of ordinary size. One assistant, in case of his strength failing, or when the work is very extensive and powerful, or when the congregation is large and scattered, or when there are many adversaries, or when some ministering brother has no call to a sphere of labor by himself, may labor with him in the gospel with good effect. The labors of the assistant, however, should be bestowed principally upon public meetings, and conversation with those who are awakened. *The guidance of inquirers* should devolve on the pastor. These are our opinions. We will now give our reasons for them, and let them have what weight they may deserve.

We think it inexpedient, not only because it is a monopoly of preachers whose labors may be needed elsewhere, but on account of the danger of divisions. Ministers are but men : and though they may not indulge envy, ambition, or any passion directly and grossly sinful, yet they may unconsciously thwart each other's endeavors, and severally attach to themselves followers and partizans. We would not represent this danger as formidable. We believe Christ has many servants on earth, who could labor together in the utmost harmony ; or easily compose any occasional jars, in the christian spirit. But there are so many occasions which furnish to susceptible minds a strong temptation, and the best of men are so liable to err, that the danger seems worthy of notice and deep reflection.

But if the laborers are themselves like-minded, and drink into one spirit, yet they may produce bickerings among their hearers. Each one has his peculiar traits of character, his peculiar manner of preaching, his own mode of conducting his intercourse with the people, and possibly views differing from his brethren on some topics which are at such a time of practical importance. One is more popular than another. One is more acceptable to this class of people, another to that. Their hearers, even established christians, are too apt to indulge their partialities without calculating the consequences. And soon they cry, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas." The action and reaction of this spirit among the people, and eventually among the min-



isters, has sometimes been peculiarly lamentable ; so that scarcely one of them could say, without condemning himself, "I am of *Christ*." Instead of co-operating to promote and extend a revival of pure religion, their envying and strife have diverted the minds of men from their eternal interests, and grieved and offended the Holy Spirit, till he has withdrawn his influence.

Where animosities and divisions are not engendered, sometimes an injury accrues to the progress of truth. There are often "shades of difference" in sentiment, where there is an entire agreement on the principal doctrines of the bible. These are often magnified by the hearers, and thus become the occasion of unsettling the minds of many, and of overthrowing the faith of some. But admit that this effect does not follow, it is at least probable that the truth will be *more efficient* from the lips of a constant preacher, than from him on one sabbath, and from a person on the next who is comparatively a stranger. We know that the stated pastor is often strengthened by the occasional labors of his brethren. Preaching the same doctrine, they add weight to his testimony. By the novelty of their manner, they rouse attention, and are sometimes the happy instruments of awakening those, who have slept for years on the brink of destruction under the preaching of the same truths. We would not insinuate, that a stranger need be at a loss for topics. Men's hearts are every where the same, and there is the same doctrine for all the sons of men. But, for a profitable selection of topics, and their application to the hearers, acquaintance with the hearers is of vast utility. A knowledge of the habits, sentiments, peculiar feelings, excuses, refuges, and hopes of his hearers, enables a minister wisely to divide the word, and give every one his portion. This knowledge cannot be expected of a stranger, or occasional preacher. And this circumstance is not unworthy of consideration, in reference to the influx of ministers where the Spirit is poured out. The faithful pastor will be thankful, in time of awakening, when solemn, affectionate, pungent preachers come to rejoice with him, to pray with him, and to sound the gospel trumpet, with a clear and certain sound, in the ears of his people. But he will wish, as much as possible, to stand in his own lot, and adapt his repeated messages to the varying condition of his flock. He is ever with them, his eye is upon their motions ; he descends their wants and dangers ; and he best knows how to bring from the treasury things new and old, applicable to them.

However, assistance is more profitable in public ministrations, than in private intercourse with persons under awakening. A knowledge of previous character and temper, of former exercises, and a great variety of circumstances, is here more important than in the pulpit or the social meeting. Every man too has his own mode of dealing with inquirers, and can do better among his own flock than with strangers. If a pastor is what he should be, his people are already acquainted with him, will feel greater confidence in opening their minds to him, and place greater reliance on his counsels and directions. We can conceive of exceptions to these remarks. A young and inexperienced pastor, for instance, may feel it a privilege to resign his inquirers to the guidance of a father in the gospel, and himself sit as a learner. But in ordinary cases, we believe it is well for the pastor who understands his duty, to hear the inquiries of the awakened, and try the hopes of converts. If he have twenty helpers, we think he should assign them the part of



public preaching and exhortation, and himself conduct the meeting for inquiry.

Where a man is located in providence, there is his field of labor. If the Lord revives his work, *he* should fill that sphere, provided health and strength of body and mind permit, with the occasional aid of judicious and devoted brethren; brethren who will fall in with his measures, walk in the same spirit, and hold up his hands in the work. It is unprofitable to a congregation or church, "to heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." To imagine that numbers, or talents, or eloquence, are necessary for the prosperity of the work, is to rely on an arm of flesh, and depart from the living God.—

*Christian Mirror.*

#### ON CANDOR.

*The following letter on the exercise of candor, in religious contentions, is from the pen of the late Rev. John Newton; a liberal minded, sincere and pious Christian.*

Dear Sir,—I am with you an admirer of candor; but let us beware of counterfeits. True candor is a Christian grace, and will grow in no soil but a believing heart. It is an eminent and amiable property of that love which beareth, believeth, hopeth, and endureth all things. It forms the most favorable judgment of persons and characters, and puts the kindest construction upon the conduct of others that it possibly can, consistent with the love of truth. It makes due allowances for the infirmities of human nature; will not listen with pleasure to what is said to the disadvantage of any, nor repeat it without a justifiable cause. It will not be confined within the walls of a party, nor restrain the actings of benevolence to those whom it fully approves; but prompts the mind to an imitation of him who is kind to the unthankful and the evil, and has taught us to consider every person we see as our neighbour.

Such is the candor which I wish to derive from the gospel; and I am persuaded they who have imbibed most of this spirit, will acknowledge that they are still defective in it. There is an unhappy propensity, even in good men, to a selfish, narrow, censorious turn of mind, and the *best* are more under the power of prejudice than they are aware. A want of candor among the professors of the same gospel, is too visible in the present day. A truly candid person will acknowledge what is right and excellent in those from whom he may be obliged to differ, he will not charge the faults or extravagances of a few upon a whole party or denomination: if he thinks it his duty to point out or refute the errors of any person, he will not impute to them such consequences of their tenets as they expressly disavow; he will not willfully misrepresent or aggravate their mistakes, or make them offenders for a word: he will keep in view the distinction between those things which are fundamental and essential to the Christian life, and those concerning which a difference of sentiment may and often has obtained among true believers. Were there more candor among those who profess to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, the emotions of anger or scorn



would not be so often felt or excited, by pronouncing or hearing the words *Churchman*, or *Dissenter*, or *Calvinist*, or even *Arminian*. Let us, my friend, be candid : let us remember how totally ignorant we ourselves once were ; how often we have changed our sentiments in one particular or another, since we first engaged in the search of truth ; how often we have been indebted, under God, for the knowledge which we have already attained. Let us likewise consider what treatment we like to meet with from others ; and do unto them as we would they should do to us. These considerations will make the exercises of candor habitual and easy.

But there is a candor, falsely so called, which springs from an indifference to the truth, and is governed by the fear of men and the love of praise. This pretended candor depreciates the most important doctrines of the gospel, and treats them as points of speculation and opinion. It aims to establish an intercommunity between light and darkness, Christ and Belial ; and under a pretence of avoiding harsh and uncharitable judgments, it introduces a mutual connivance in principles and practices which are already expressly condemned by clear decisions of scripture. Let us not listen to the advocates for a candor of this sort ; such a lukewarm temper, in those who would be thought friends of the gospel, is treason against God, and treachery to the souls of men. It is observable, that they who boast most of this candor, and pretend to the most enlarged and liberal way of thinking, are generally agreed to exclude from their comprehension all whom they call bigots ; that is, in other words, those who having been led by divine grace to build their hopes upon the foundation which God has laid in Zion, are free to declare their conviction, that other foundation can no man lay ; and who, having seen that the friendship of the world is enmity, with God, dare no longer conform to its leading maxims or customs, nor express a favorable judgment of the state or conduct of those who do.

If a person be an avowed socinian or deist, I am still to treat him with candor ; he has a right from me, so far as he comes in my way, to all the kind offices of humanity. I am not to hate, reproach or affront him ; or to detract from what may be valuable in his character, considered as a member of society. He may be a good lawyer, or historian, or physician ; and I am not to lessen him in these respects, because I cannot commend him as a divine. I am bound to pity his errors, and to pray if peradventure God will give him repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth ; and if I have a call to converse with him, I should speak with all gentleness and meekness, remembering that grace alone has made me to differ. But I am not to compliment him, to insinuate, or even to admit that there can be any safety in his principles. Far be that candor from us which represents the scriptures as a nose of wax, so that a person may reject or elude the testimonies there given to the Deity and atonement of Christ, and the all-powerful agency of the Holy Spirit, with impunity.

It is to be lamented that too many judge rather by the notions which people express, than by the fruits which they produce ; and as they judge of others, so they often judge of themselves. We cannot have opportunity to say all we could wish, and to all whom we would wish to say it, upon this subject, in private life. Therefore it is the wisdom and duty of those who preach, and of those who print, to drop a word



of caution in the way of their bearers and readers, that they may not mistake notion for life, nor the form of godliness for the power. The grace of God is an operative principle ; and where it really has place in the heart, the effects will be seen ; Acts xi. 23. : effects so uniform and extensive, that the apostle James makes one single branch of conduct, and that such a one as is not thought the most important, a sufficient test of our state before God ; for he affirms universally, that “ if any man seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, his religion is vain.” And again he assures us, that “ whoever will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God.” And to the same purpose Paul expresses himself on the subject of love, (that love which he describes so accurately, that none can mistake it, unless they willingly deceive themselves.) He declares that without this love, the brightest knowledge, the warmest zeal, and the most splendid gifts are nothing worth. It is to be feared these decisions will bear hard upon many who have a name to live among the churches of Christ. They are hearers and approvers of the gospel, express a regard to those who preach it ; they will stickle and fight for the doctrines, and know not how to bear those who fall a hair’s breadth short of their standard ; and yet there is so much levity or pride, censoriousness or worldliness, discoverable in their general behavior, that their characters appear very dubious ; and though we are bound to wish them well, candor will not oblige or warrant us to judge favorably of such conduct ; for the unerring word of God is the standard to which our judgments are to be referred and conformed.

In the sense and under the limitations which I have expressed, we ought to cultivate a candid spirit, and learn from the experience of our own weakness, to be gentle and tender to others ; avoiding at the same time that indifference and cowardice, which, under the name of candor, countenances error, extenuates sin, and derogates from the authority of scripture. I am, &c.

---

FROM THE MISSIONARY HERALD.

MONTHLY-CONCERT LECTURES.

The Missionary Discourses, of the intended publication of which we gave some notice at p. 395 of our last volume, have since been issued from the press. They are twenty in number, and treat on a variety of topics of great importance as it respects charitable efforts, especially those of a missionary character. In the first discourse, Mr. Pond proves the work of missions to be a divine institution. This being proved, he infers that it is as binding as any other institution, and that “ those churches cannot expect to prosper who wickedly neglect it.” In this discourse he refutes very satisfactorily some of the more common and popular objections to foreign missions. The second, entitled “ Paul a Missionary to the Heathen,” was inserted in our last volume, p. 322, and need not be again noticed. The third reviews the labors of Paul, and shews why he accomplished so much as he did. The reflections, on a review of the subject, are, that “ one man is capable of doing much good ;” but that, in order to be extensively useful, indi-



viduals and churches need the spirit and heart of that Apostle. The fourth discourse considers the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the primitive Christians, and Christians now, for spreading the Gospel. The Apostles had superior advantages in the gift of tongues, and the power of working miracles ; and, so far as it was absolutely necessary, but probably not always, they enjoyed the supernatural influences of the Holy Spirit. "In recounting these superior advantages of the Apostles," says the author, "it deserved however to be remarked, that they are advantages of which we stand in but little need." This he proves very well. The superior advantages possessed by Christians now, result from modern improvements in navigation, the art of printing, the protection of government, the number and acquirements of Christian teachers and Christians generally, and the mode of operation at present pursued. Two or three paragraphs near the close of the lecture, we cannot forbear quoting.

"Indeed all the advances in science and knowledge which have been made since the days of the Apostles, are, directly or indirectly, so many advantages in the hands of present Christians for promoting the gospel of their Redeemer. These advances, it will not be questioned, have been very great. But it is a well grounded maxim, that "knowledge is power ;" and it is not more powerful probably in its influence upon any work, than upon that of promoting the gospel. Every step taken in the field of real science is so much gained to the cause of light and truth, and is fitted in some way, either more or less remotely, to subserve the interests of true religion in the world.

"The comparison we have here made between the several advantages of the primitive Christians, and those possessed by Christians now, in relation to the work of spreading the gospel, must I think satisfy every impartial mind, that their unparalleled success is not to be accounted for on the ground of their superior advantages : For if in some respects they had an advantage over us ; in many others, and those too I venture to say of greater importance, we have a decided advantage over them.

"Perhaps it will be urged, in accounting for their successes, that the *Spirit* in a remarkable degree attended their labors. Wherever they went, the Holy Spirit followed them, and rendered their efforts powerful and effectual.—This, doubtless, was the fact ; but the question still remains, *Why* did the Holy Spirit follow them ? Why did he bless their exertions more signally than ours ? God, to be sure, is a sovereign in the distribution of spiritual favors ; yet he is not an arbitrary sovereign—and he never acts but in view of reasons. What reason then can be given, why the Holy Spirit should have accompanied and blessed the labors of the primitive Christians, more than the labors of Christians since, except that they were more *prayerful*, more *devoted*, and more *eminently holy* ?"

The next discourse shews, that the work of extending the Gospel through the world, great as it is, is to be regarded as a privilege, for which the people of God should be thankful, because, among other reasons, "by means of it they may be kept from such things as would injure them ;"—from sloth, and from low, unworthy, and sinful pursuits. This great work will moreover tend to excite and strengthen the best and most desirable affections, and to promote the most valuable habits in man as a moral, accountable, immortal being. And what



an opportunity does it give the Christian for *letting his light shine*! And how may it augment the moral resources, life, and vigor of the church militant! On these topics the author expatiates in a plain, but intelligent and satisfactory manner. With great good sense he has adapted his mode of reasoning, and style of expression, to the comprehension of the religious community at large. How else would his discourses have been suitable for the Monthly Concert, or indeed for any other common religious assembly? His practical reflections at the close of this discourse, are deserving of careful attention.

---

AN AGED SINNER'S ADVICE.

*"Quench not the Spirit."*

"My children," said the old man, "few are the words of your dying father. I wish them to sink deep into your hearts." Then raising himself a little in his bed with a degree of strength which he had not been able to command for several of the last weeks of his sickness, he proceeded.

"When young I enjoyed religious privileges and was the subject of occasional serious reflection. When just entering my 16th year, religious impressions were made on my mind with unusual force. I seemed to hear a voice continually saying to me *seek religion now*. I was unhappy; my former amusements lost their relish. Still I was not willing wholly to relinquish them, and obey the voice which urged me to seek religion immediately. One day, after much reflection, I deliberately promised to God that as soon as the season of youthful amusement was past, I would give myself to religious pursuits.—My anxieties immediately left me; I returned to my amusements and the whole subject was soon forgotten.

"When at twenty-five, the monitory voice returned, reminded me of my promise, and again pressed upon me the importance of eternal things.—Though I had not thought of my promise for years, I acknowledged its obligation, but an immediate fulfilment seemed more impracticable than it did nine years before.

"I avowed with increased solemnity, that when the cares of a rising family should subside I would certainly attend to the concerns of religion.

"Again I applied myself to worldly avocations, and soon buried all thoughts of the admonition I had received. At fifty, when you, my children, were diminishing, instead of increasing my cares, this heavenly monitor returned.—"*Fulfil your promise, seek religion now*" was continually pressing upon my mind. I knew that I had made such a promise, but I felt dissatisfied that its fulfilment should be claimed so soon. I regretted that I had not attended to the subject before, when I could have done it with less difficulty; but such was the extent and pressure of my business that to do it then seemed impossible. The subject made me unhappy, and after much deliberation I sought relief to my troubled feelings, by most solemnly renewing my promise to God.—When, I said, the pressure of business is past, I will devote my whole attention to a preparation for eternity.



“No sooner had I fixed my mind on this course, than my anxieties left me, the strivings of the Spirit ceased in my bosom, and ceased for ever.—When sickness warned me of approaching death I sought to fix my feelings on this subject, but it was in vain. There was a gloom and terror drawn around religion at which my soul shuddered. I felt that I was forsaken of God, but it did not move me. I had no love to God, no repentance for sin, nor wish to forsake it. I felt nothing but the sudden gloom of despair—I knew I was in the hands of a justly offended God from whom I expected no mercy and could ask none.—With these feelings I am now about to enter the eternal world. To you my children I can only say, profit by my example—quench not the Spirit—seek religion now, if you would avoid a miserable eternity; put not off the concerns of your souls till”—The sentence died upon his lips; his strength, which had been all summoned to make this last effort, suddenly failed, he fell back upon his bed, and with a groan that seemed to speak the pains of another world, the immortal spirit took its flight from that body which it had inhabited nearly fourscore years, to receive according to that it had done.

This little narrative I had from a grandson of the old man, who stood by his dying bed. He was a minister of the Gospel, and dated his first permanent conviction from the solemnities of that awful scene. The descendants of the old man were numerous, most of whom became hopefully pious. Two, who are now preachers, and several others were first awakened by his dying charge.

A few particulars in the last years of this aged sinner are perhaps worthy of remark.

Three years before his death there was a revival in the place where he resided, and the son with whom he lived was a subject of its influence. He made the most violent opposition to his son's religious feelings, and never whilst able to move about the house did he remain in the room during family prayers, nor till his dying hour was a prayer offered in his hearing at his request.

He so studiously avoided all religious conversation, that from the death of his wife, which was thirteen years previous, he was never known to say a word about his own feelings, till in his dying moments he made the communication above given.—*Boston Monitor*.

---

#### APHORISMS.

Self has two eyes which must be put out, self-strength, and self-confidence.

The *lives* of professors are *books* which the most ignorant and depraved can read and understand.

The pious poor are made the representatives of Christ; whatever we give them is, in scripture language, given to the Saviour himself.

---

#### ANECDOTE.

A person meeting another returning, after having heard a popular preacher, said to him, “Well, I hope you have been highly gratified.”



"Indeed I have replied the other. I wish I could have prevailed on you to hear him, I am sure you would have never relished any other preacher afterwards." "Then," returned the wiser Christian, "I am determined I never will hear him, for I wish to hear such a preacher, as will give me so high a relish and esteem for the word of God, that I shall receive it with great eagerness and delight whenever it is delivered."

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### REVIVALS OF RELIGION IN GERMANY.

A great change has been wrought in many parts of Germany and the adjoining countries, within the last ten or twelve years. The establishment of Bible and Missionary Societies has been followed very extensively by revivals of evangelical religion. A writer in the London Baptist Magazine, for August, relates the following facts, which were communicated to him by two pious German ministers.

It was not till since the close of the war, that any general attention was excited respecting evangelical religion. Five years ago, there were five or six ministers belonging to each of the twenty-one churches in Berlin, but not any of them evangelical persons; now there is no church where there is not, at least, one pious evangelical pastor, preaching the doctrines of the gospel, and adorning it by his conduct.

In the University of Berlin, there are thirty or forty pious students. One of the professors, of the name of Tholock, about twenty-five years of age, who knows fifteen languages, is in the practice of receiving these every Wednesday at his own house, for the purpose of giving them religious instruction. About ten of these usually associate on a Saturday evening, at the University, for prayer, and for reading and expounding the Scriptures. Four of the professors in the University are pious evangelical men. One of these, named Neander, Professor of Evangelical History, is a converted Jew, of good reputation, and considerable standing.

When Professor Tholock was, some time since, at Copenhagen, he inquired for a long time in vain, at the University, after pious young men; at length, by accident, a person who cailed at the inn, was discovered by him as being of that character, and he introduced him to a considerable number of pious youth, who were earnestly seeking after God.

The pious students, who have been mentioned as at the University of Berlin, were from different German Universities, and their statement respecting them was, that in all of them there were devoted youths, consecrating themselves to the service of God.

At Erlangen, in Bavaria, there are in the University, three pious Professors: one of whom has the reputation of being one of the most learned men on the Continent.

At Basle, in Switzerland, in the year 1818, about twenty young men were brought to know the grace of God in truth. As they had no evangelical instructors, they frequently met together for reading the scriptures and prayer. One of these is engaged by the London Society



for promoting the conversion of the Jews ; and another, named Burkhardt, brother to the late excellent Missionary of that name, is an assistant minister with Dr. Steinkopff, in the Savoy, London.

At Albufelt, in Prussia, there is a minister of the Lutheran church, named Doering, the apostle of the age. He pays particular regard to young persons. On a Monday evening he collects at his house about two hundred unmarried men ; and on a Wednesday evening, about forty young ladies ; for the purposes of giving them religious instruction. He is indefatigable in visiting the prisons and hospitals, distributing religious tracts, and has been the instrument of the conversion of many to the knowledge of Christ. In all this vicinity, the churches are supplied with, at least, twenty evangelical pastors. The people, when they want a minister, inquire, " Is he a pious minister ? "

A minister named Couard, about thirty years of age, who preaches in a church in Berlin, has an excessively crowded congregation of six or seven thousand hearers : he lately preached seven sermons from " Ye must be born again." The churches are forsaken where the gospel is not faithfully preached.

The same spirit of opposition exists there as in England, against evangelical religion. If they observe any one listen attentively, or appear serious and devout, they call them, by way of reproach, " Head-hangers."

A person from the neighbourhood of Brunswick, gave the following account. " Above five years since there was not one pious person in all the neighbourhood, nor any evangelical minister.—Two farmers were walking in their fields, when one of them, as if his mind had been instantly impressed with the subject, said, ' We possess all these riches, but we have never returned thanks to God, the giver of them. Surely we ought to do so. Come, let us kneel down, and give thanks to God, and seek his pardon and blessing.' They enjoyed so much pleasure in this exercise, that they resolved to meet at their houses on a Lord's day evening, for praying and searching the scriptures. Their wives soon united with them.—Others, who observed them thus assemble, asked, ' What are you doing ? We will meet with you.' Thus, persons from different villages were collected, till the room was overcrowded. These meetings were held in other adjacent villages, until there were ninety or an hundred serious persons. At length, one of the Lutheran pastors in the neighbourhood became an enlightened man, and now they all attend upon his ministry."

These revivals are attributed to the establishment of Bible and Missionary Societies ; and the work of conversion has been so rapid, especially among students in the Universities, that scores of pious youths are burning with ardour to be employed in Missionary labours, in any part of the globe.



## FOR THE EVANGELIST.

## ON THE DEATH OF A FEMALE FRIEND.

A voice from *Him unseen*, I hear,  
 Address'd to *One* on earth most dear.  
 "Come, quit the earth's base clod of dust,  
 And to my arms thy spirit trust.  
 I'll send an Angel guard and guide,  
 To waft it o'er the swelling tide ;  
 The Mighty Chief who bled to save,  
 Shall stand upon the topmost wave ;  
 His voice shall calm proud Jordan's surge,  
 His sword the Dragon's fury merge,  
 Drive all the hellish crew to rout,  
 Dispel all fear—blast ev'ry doubt,  
 Then, from the cloud full-orb'd appear,  
 Heaven's high and best belov'd compeer,  
 Eternal Friend of that dear clay,  
 That soon shall know immortal day,  
 That soon, remov'd from earth's base clod,  
 Shall truly know th' embrace of God."  
 Up through the clouds I trace the way,  
 The clouds of snow and golden ray,  
 Where my Melissa took her flight,  
 And vanish'd from my aching sight.  
 In that bright way I fain would go,  
 And quit these fading scenes below.  
 Fain would I quickly mount and rise,  
 And with Melissa seek the skies.  
 My aching head no pillow finds,  
 No comforts spring from fellow-minds !  
 My earthly house is dark and drear,  
 Around are shades—within is fear ;  
 The Dragon's rage is fir'd the more,  
 Since death has touch'd me to the core.  
 O come the Prophet's glorious car !  
 O fly some Cherub from afar !  
 And speed me in my wish'd-for flight,  
 To realms of pure unmix'd delight.  
 O come the Prophet's glorious car !  
 O fly some cherub from afar !  
 And let me quit this clod of clay,  
 And fly to that eternal day,  
 Where, freed from death and earth's base clod,  
 Melissa now enjoys her God.

CYPARISSA.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The communication of Trophimus will be inserted. P. C. has been received and is under consideration.